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Top-six potential

Canucks have high hopes for Sven Baertschi

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THREE RESCUES IN THREE DAYS

North Shore Rescue crews plucked two men from Crown Mountain early Monday after they became stranded while climbing Sunday. The rescue, the third in three days, has crews reminding people that terrain is still treacherous on the North Shore Mountains despite spring-like temperatures in the region. Story, page 4. COURTESY NORTH SHORE RESCUE

Terrorism suspects feared setup

Trial. Video allegedly shows John Nuttall and Amanda Korody building bombs from pressure cookers

Just days ahead of an alleged bomb plot, a B.C. man grew fearful that he and his wife would be forced to "take the fall" if they became a liability to an Arab businessman they believed was helping them carry out their planned Canada Day attack, their trial has heard.

In a video played at the couple's terrorism trial Monday, John Nuttall confides in his wife, Amanda Korody, that he believes they could be killed by shadowy figures up the chain of command.

By the time the video was recorded on June 28, 2013, Nuttall and Korody had spent months interacting with the businessman, who was actually an undercover RCMP officer.

"His third contingency plan is ditch us, we're expendable, save himself," Nuttall tells his wife as they are holed up in a motel near Vancouver to allegedly build bombs out of pressure cookers.

"If we don't have these done, there's a good chance we will be killed or set up. Do you understand? ... Someone's gotta take the fall. It's not gonna be him, OK?"

Nuttall and Korody, recent converts to radical Islam, had no idea they were being videotaped by police in the weeks leading up to their arrest in July 2013. They are each charged with four terrorism-related offences.

The Crown's theory is that the pair planned to detonate bombs outside the legislature in Victoria as vengeance for the mistreatment of Muslims overseas.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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NEWS 1

Transit. Group worried tax could rise

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business says its members worry that the proposed 0.5 per cent Congestion Improvement Tax could grow over time.

The federation polled 319 of its members and found that 92 per cent don't trust future governments will keep the rate at 0.5 per cent.

Richard Truscott, B.C. director of the CFIB, said hypothetical tax increases are a "legitimate" concern for members being asked to approve the creation of a new taxpayer-funded revenue source.

"People are concerned this could turn into something bigger down the road," said Truscott. "We're talking about a whole new revenue tax, it's appropriate to be raising questions about its future."

The region's mayors want the proposed regional sales tax to pay for its share of a 10-year, $7.5-billion transit plan, which includes a Vancouver subway along Broadway, light rapid transit lines in Surrey, a new Pattullo Bridge and region-wide road and transit improvements.

While the mayors are adamant they have no intention to increase the rate from 0.5 per cent, they have admitted the tax will be permanent to pay for continued operating costs.

Any decision to raise the tax in the future would have to be handled provincially through the legislature.

When reached for comment, the Ministry of Finance said it would only consider the 0.5 per cent rate being put to voters in the spring plebiscite starting March 16.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

Tennis practice with Milos Raonic

Canada's Milos Raonic, of Toronto, participates in Davis Cup tennis practice in Vancouver on Monday. Canada and Japan are scheduled to meet in a Davis Cup world group first-round tie in Vancouver March 6-8.

DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Officials warn casual users about powerful narcotic

Fentanyl. Detected in 25% of overdose deaths in B.C. last year

THANDI FLETCHER
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B.C. police and health officials are warning casual drug users of the dangers of fentanyl following a spike in overdose deaths.

Police say fentanyl, a powerful narcotic prescribed by doctors in patch form for severe pain, has been showing up mixed with street drugs like heroin and even marijuana.

Last year, fentanyl was detected in 25 per cent of the 336 deaths from illicit drug overdoses in B.C., up from five per cent in 2012, according to the BC Coroners Service.

The majority of people dying of fentanyl overdoses are men between the ages of 20 and 49 who snort or smoke drugs recreationally — not heavy drug addicts on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, said health officials.

"These people are taking a drug that they're not expecting to take that they have no tolerance to, and they're experiencing bad outcomes," said Dr. Mark Lysyshyn, medical health officer for Vancouver Coastal Health. "The real point of this campaign is to get at a drug-using population that we don't know how to communicate with … because those are the people that are actually dying of this problem."

With the increase in overdose deaths linked to fentanyl, police believe more of the drug is circulating in B.C. street drugs.

Fentanyl is "extremely potent" and even a small amount can cause an overdose, said Lysyshyn.

"It's a respiratory depressant and that's how it kills people," he said.

Dr. Eleni Galanis of the BC Centre for Disease Control said people may be using street drugs like heroin or oxycodone without knowing it contains fentanyl or another substance.

She said the drug is especially dangerous for people who use drugs recreationally as they haven't built up tolerance.

Health officials urged anyone who sees someone in medical distress to call 911 and stay with them until paramedics arrive.

Officials also urged people who use drugs to never use alone, to use only a small amount to start and to not mix drugs and alcohol.

Signs of a fentanyl overdose include extreme sleepiness, difficulty walking and talking, slowed breathing and snoring.

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New Westminster. Officer dismissed after alleged theft

The New Westminster Police Department has cut ties with one of its own after an internal theft investigation.

The member involved had eight years of service and is no longer employed with the NWPD, according to a press release from the department. The officer faces "Police Act and Criminal Code allegations related to other matters," said the statement.

"A critical function of any police department is to maintain public trust by acting with the utmost of integrity and ensuring a strong commitment to ethical behavior by all of its employees," said Chief Const. Dave Jones.

Jones added the allegation was taken very seriously from the outset.

TEREZA VERENCA/FOR METRO

Details

Because the matter is before the courts, the NWPD said they were unable to release further details.

Queen of the North

Ferry navigator turns to Supreme Court

A former ferry navigator who was convicted of criminal negligence in a fatal sinking off the B.C. coast is asking the Supreme Court of Canada to review his case.

Karl Lilgert was convicted of two counts of criminal negligence causing death and sentenced to four years for his role in the 2006 sinking of the Queen of the North.

The ferry struck an island and sank during an overnight voyage from northern B.C. to Vancouver Island, killing passengers Gerald Foisy and Shirley Rosette.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Inquest hears testimony of mill workers' wives

Lakeland Mills explosion. Men were already concerned about safety, inquiry hears

A large fire burns at the Lakeland Mills sawmill in Prince George on April 24, 2012. ANDREW JOHNSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

A coroner's inquest into an explosion at a sawmill in Prince George has begun with testimony from the wives of the two men who were killed in a blaze.

Joanna Burrows described Alan Little as an intelligent man who liked to read and write poetry and was a good listener.

"I had an assumption of what a mill worker would be like and I was surprised at the complexity of his personality," Burrows said Monday at the inquest looking into the April 2012 disaster that also injured 22 men.

She said that about a year before the fire, her husband had become increasingly stressed as management put more emphasis on productivity and her husband suffered chest pains and was grinding his teeth.

She said her husband and his co-workers became increasingly concerned after an explosion at Babine Forest Products, near Burns Lake, three months earlier, when two men were killed. There had already been a fire at Lakeland the day before the Babine incident.

Ronda Roche described her husband Glenn Roche as intelligent and meticulous, a man who had high standards and constantly strived to beat production levels with each passing day.

But, like Little, he became concerned following the fire at Lakeland and the explosion at Babine the next day, saying the Lakeland fire was not just a regular blaze but that "the air in front of him was on fire."

The inquest before a jury of seven men is expected to hear from 47 witnesses over four weeks.

A coroner's inquest can result in recommendations to prevent similar deaths in the future but it does not lay blame or find fault.

PRINCE GEORGE CITIZEN

City purchases $11.4M worth of land for affordable housing

The City of Vancouver has paid $11,491,000 for land that will be used to build affordable rental housing.

The city announced Monday that it has closed the purchase of eight lots along Southwest Marine Drive, between Ontario and Manitoba streets. The purchased lots will be used to build up to 125 units of rental housing divided between two projects.

According to the city's statement, each of the developments will be led by the newly established Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency, and the city says 50 per cent of the units will be dedicated for family housing.

The Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency was created in July 2014 based on recommendations from the city's task force on housing affordability.

The agency is tasked with creating 2,500 new affordable homes by 2021, with 500 slated to come online in the next three years.

The purchase of the land was funded through community amenity contributions collected from developers and allocated to the Cambie Corridor Affordable Housing Fund.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

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Two climbers rescued from Crown Mountain

Safe. Monday's rescue was the third in as many days on Crown Mountain

Two climbers who became stranded deep in the North Shore Mountains on Sunday were rescued early Monday.

Mike Danks of North Shore Rescue said crews were called to Crown Mountain around 9:30 p.m. when the men, both in their mid-20s, didn't return home as scheduled.

"One thing that these guys did, which is great, is they made sure to tell someone where they were going and what time they were expected back," Danks told Metro. "So we had a pretty good idea of where they were going to be."

Rescue crews located the men, who were stuck on treacherous terrain in the northeast part of the mountain, around 3 a.m. but were unable to reach them in the dark.

Around 7 a.m., crews plucked the men from the mountainside by helicopter using a 76-metre long-line.

The men, who were uninjured, have hypothermia after spending a cold night on the mountain and were taken to Lion's Gate Hospital for observation.

"They were dressed in very light clothing," said Danks. "They were adequately prepared for the hike they were doing but they were not prepared in case of an emergency."

THANDI FLETCHER/METRO

North Shore Rescue rescued two climbers who became stranded on a treacherous part of Crown Mountain on Sunday. CONTRIBUTED

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Facelift. Robson Street competition sees more than 80 design entries

The 800-block of Robson Street will receive another facelift this summer, with the return of the Robson Redux design competition.

The goal of the contest is to transform the space into an inviting plaza where you can people watch or mingle with your neighbour. Last year, pedestrians were invited to "swim the urban reef" by using the wooden sculptures as a resting spot.

More than 80 entries for the second annual competition (it will be the fourth year that Viva Vancouver has transformed the space) have been submitted to the City of Vancouver, something Scott Edwards, manager of street activities, is thrilled about.

"They come from as far as Hong Kong, New York, Seoul and Vienna. What we found is that there's a diversity of creative ideas," he told Metro.

The submissions, which Edwards refused to expand on as a way of "not singling anyone out," will be on display at the Museum of Vancouver until March 15. Visitors can also cast a ballot for the People's Choice Award.

"There's something to be said about having all the large design boards laid out in one place," Edwards said.

Quoted

"They come from as far as Hong Kong, New York, Seoul and Vienna. What we found is that there's a diversity of creative ideas."

Scott Edwards, manager of street activities, on the design entries

The winning team, chosen by a jury of experts through a blind vote, will receive a $5,000 honorarium and up to $40,000 from the city to help cover project costs. The structure would go up sometime before Canada Day and would come down around the Labour Day weekend.

Once summer is over, the project usually finds a new home, according to Edwards. For example, the famous giant-sized beanbags known as Pop Rocks, which made their debut on Robson Street in 2012, are being used at UBC.

"It's kind of nice how they do live an ongoing life, yet not necessarily on the 800th block of Robson," he said.

For more information about the design-build competition, visit vivadesigncomp.ca.

TEREZA VERENCA/FOR METRO

Garry Handlen

Ontario man accused of killing two B.C. children appears in court

A 67-year-old man charged with first-degree murder in the historic deaths of two young girls has made a brief court appearance in B.C.'s Fraser Valley.

Garry Handlen is accused of killing 11-year-old Kathryn Mary Herbert in 1975 and 12-year-old Monica Jack in 1978.

The Ontario man wore glasses and a jail-issued red sweatsuit when he appeared by video link but said nothing as lawyers in Abbotsford set a new date of April 1 to disclose more documents.

The mothers of the girls wiped away tears as they left the courtroom and hugged each other before meeting with prosecutors, but the women declined to comment. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chris White-Ferrell takes a selfie using a selfie stick outside the Canadian Museum for Human Rights on Monday afternoon. The museum has banned the use of selfie sticks inside the building. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Human rights shrine bans selfie-stick use

Self-portraits. The Canadian Museum for Human Rights says the ban will ensure the safety of the museum's visitors and its exhibits

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg is joining renowned museums around the world in banning the use of selfie sticks.

The sticks are the extendable poles that hold a camera or smartphone beyond arm's length to help take group photographs or pictures of one's self.

Maureen Fitzhenry, a museum spokeswoman, says one of the main reasons for the ban is the safety of museum visitors and exhibits.

Fitzhenry says the facility is also concerned about the devices posing an obstacle to other visitors and in maintaining a respectful environment, given the content of some of the exhibits.

Selfies are still allowed, but the museum encourages visitors to keep to handheld, flash-free photography and doesn't allow the use of camera tripods.

Fitzhenry says the museum hasn't had any trouble with people using the sticks so far.

In February, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York barred visitors from using the devices, fearing they could damage artworks and disrupt fellow patrons.

The Met's decision followed a string of U.S. institutions outlawing selfie sticks, including New York's Museum of Modern Art, the National Gallery of Art in Washington and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston.

The National Gallery in central London disallows them as well.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto tunnel

Mystery hangout no threat: Police

A mystery tunnel discovered near a Pan Am Games venue in north Toronto was built by two men who wanted a place to "hang out," police said Monday.

Police have determined there was never any criminal intent or danger to public safety, and no charges will be laid. THE CANADIAN PRESS

University of Alberta

President aware of anti-abortion display concerns

The president of the University of Alberta is aware of concerns over an upcoming anti-abortion display. In a statement Indira Samarasekera says Go-Life is a registered student group and has followed university policies. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Thailand

Quebec sisters likely poisoned by pesticide: Coroner

A Quebec coroner has concluded two sisters found dead in a Thailand hotel in 2012 were likely intoxicated by phosphine. The same pesticide is believed responsible for the recent deaths of two children in northern Alberta. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Study: Climate change a factor in Syria chaos

Record drought. Damaging dry spell forced farmers to move to poverty-stricken cities

The extreme drought that wreaked havoc on Syria between 2006 and 2010 was exacerbated by climate change, and that drought may have helped trigger the country's 2011 revolution, says a provocative new study.

The revolution has since evolved into a complex war that has killed at least 200,000 people, displaced millions and involved many countries. It has also led to the birth of the Islamic State, the brutal terrorist organization that controls vast areas of Syria and Iraq.

"We are not saying climate change caused the uprising," said Colin Kelley, a climatologist at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and lead author of the study. "What we are saying is that this multi-year drought was made more severe due to this long-term trend, and that led to this chain of events."

Problem faced by farmers

Shahrzad Mohtadi, co-author of the study, says decades of unsustainable policies made it tough for Syrian farmers to weather the drought of 2006-10. The Assad family encouraged export crops like cotton, which needs a lot of water, and groundwater wells were not regulated, she said. "It depleted groundwater that would have helped during long, dry years."

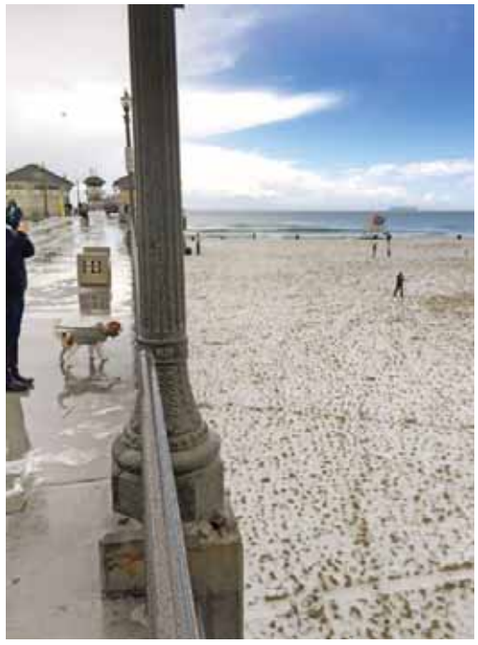
The study was published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences on Monday.

Researchers say the multi-year drought, the worst ever recorded in the region, wrecked agriculture in the breadbasket region of northern Syria, driving farmers and their families to cities where poverty and mismanagement by the Bashar Assad government was rampant. This migration came on the heels of more than 1.5 million Iraqi refugees fleeing war in their country and settling in Syria, pointed out Kelley.

"The urban population increased by 50 per cent in eight years. That is a tremendous strain on existing resources," he said. The uprising happened directly after that, he said.

Droughts have been a recurring phenomenon in the Mediterranean region, including substantial ones in the 1950s, 1980s and 1990s, but concern is rising that man-made climate change is intensifying their frequency and duration.

The area called the Fertile Crescent has undergone warming of 1 to 1.2 degrees Celsius and a 10 per cent reduction in wet-season precipitation since 1900, say researchers. This trend is in line with models of human-influenced global warming, said Kelley. The region is expected to get drier and hotter. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Life's a beach in hail-hit Cali

Pedestrians on the Huntington Beach pier look at a beach covered with hail after a passing storm on Monday in Huntington Beach, Calif. The National Weather Service says at least an inch of icy pellets coated the sand at Huntington Beach after the system roared ashore Monday morning. VICTOR M BRAVO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Los Angeles

Police shooting of homeless man caught on video

Police fatally shot a homeless man during a "brutal" videotaped struggle in which a rookie officer cried out that the man had hold of his gun before three other officers opened fire, the Los Angeles police chief said Monday.

Chief Charlie Beck's account of the incident, including photos showing the condition of the gun, was rare 24 hours after a shooting involving an officer. It comes amid heightened attention to killings by police that have led to protests, some violent, across the United States.

Beck said video showed the man reaching toward the officer's waistband. "You can hear the young officer who was primarily engaged in the confrontation saying that 'He has my gun. He has my gun,'" Beck said. "He says it several times, with conviction." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Iraq. Military operation aiming to recapture town from Islamic State group

Backed by Iranian-supported Shiite militias, Iraqi forces launched a large-scale offensive Monday to retake Saddam Hussein's hometown from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) group, the first in a series of campaigns to try to reclaim large parts of northern Iraq from the Sunni extremists.

Previous attempts to capture the symbolic city have failed, and hours into Monday's operation, the military said it still hadn't entered Tikrit, indicating a long battle lies ahead.

Retaking it will help Iraqi forces secure a major supply link for any future operation to retake Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city which has been under militant rule since June.

State-run Al-Iraqiya television said that forces were attacking from different directions, backed by artillery and airstrikes by Iraqi fighter jets.

The town in question

Tikrit, the provincial capital of Salauhddin province, 80 miles (130 kilometres) north of Baghdad, fell to the Islamic State group last summer, along with Mosul and other areas in the country's Sunni heartland.

It said the militants were dislodged from some areas outside the city, but several hours into the operation it gave no additional details.

U.S. military officials have said a co-ordinated military mission to retake Mosul will likely begin in April or May and involve as many as 25,000 Iraqi troops.

But the Americans have cautioned that if the Iraqis aren't ready, the offensive could be delayed.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine conflict body count now over 6,000

Civilians hit hard.

Russia denies they are at war despite steady flow of weapons and troops from the country

A destroyed tank is abandoned on the road at a former Ukrainian army checkpoint that was overran last month by Russia-backed separatists during the offensive for Debaltseve. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

More than 6,000 people have died in eastern Ukraine since the start of the conflict almost a year ago that has led to a "merciless devastation of civilian lives and infrastructure," the U.N. human rights office said Monday.

Hundreds of civilians and military personnel have been killed in recent weeks alone after an upswing in fighting particularly near Donetsk airport and in the Debaltseve area, the Geneva-based body said in a report covering the period from December to February.

The strategic railroad town of Debaltseve was captured from Ukrainian government forces last month by pro-Russian separatists.

While Russia denies its troops are fighting in Ukraine, the U.N. cited "credible reports (that) indicate a continuing flow of heavy weaponry and foreign fighters" from Russia.

"This has sustained and enhanced the capacity of armed groups of the self-proclaimed 'Donetsk people's republic' and 'Luhansk people's republic' to resist Government armed forces and to launch new offensives in some areas, including around the Donetsk airport, Mariupol and Debaltseve," it said.

U.N. rights chief Zeid Raad al-Hussein said many civilians stay in embattled areas "because they fear for their lives if they try to move."

"Many others stay to protect children, other family members, or their property," while some are forced to stay or unable to leave, he added.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Jordan joins Forbes list

Forbes. Investment in Charlotte Hornets lifted NBA Hall of Fame player onto annual list

Michael Jordan and two other NBA owners have joined Forbes' annual list of the world's billionaires.

Forbes released its list of billionaires on Monday and noted that Jordan's net worth is estimated at $1 billion US, thanks to his well-timed investment in the Charlotte Hornets.

Michael Jordan

Houston Rockets owner Leslie Alexander, with a net worth of $1.6 billion, and Chicago Bulls owner Jerry Reinsdorf, worth $1.3 billion, also made the list.

The net worth of NBA franchise values increased this past year after the sale of the Los Angeles Clippers to Steve Ballmer for $2 billion.

The 52-year-old Jordan, a Hall of Fame player who won six NBA championships with the Bulls, reached billionaire status last June, according to the magazine. This is his first year on Forbes' annual list, which is typically released in March. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Top 10

1. Bill Gates, U.S.A. Net worth: $79.2 billion. Source of wealth: Technology company Microsoft Corp.
2. Carlos Slim Helu, Mexico. Net worth: $77.1 billion. Source of wealth: Telecommunications.
3. Warren Buffett, U.S.A. Net worth: $72.7 billion. Source of wealth: Investment holding company Berkshire Hathaway Inc.
4. Amancio Ortega, Spain. Net worth: $64.5 billion. Source of wealth: Retail chain Zara.
5. Larry Ellison, U.S.A. Net worth: $54.3 billion. Source of wealth: Technology company Oracle Corp.
6. Charles Koch (tie), U.S.A. Net worth: $42.9 billion. Source of wealth: Conglomerate Koch Industries.
6. David Koch (tie), U.S.A. Net worth: $42.9 billion. Source of wealth: Conglomerate Koch Industries.
8. Christy Walton, U.S.A. Net worth: $41.7 billion. Source of wealth: Retailer Wal-Mart Stores Inc.
9. Jim Walton, U.S.A. Net worth: $40.6 billion. Source of wealth: Retailer Wal-Mart Stores Inc.
10. Liliane Bettencourt, France. Net worth: $40.1 billion. Source of wealth: Cosmetics company L'Oreal.

Google takes to treetops

Google revealed images Monday taken by its Trekker device that shows what it's like to zip through trees in the Amazon jungle in South America. The images are the latest addition to the Google Maps Street View option. COURTESY GOOGLE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Wireless networks. Google to offer cellular services

Google will soon be offering cellular network plans.

Vice-president Sundar Pichai says Google, the leading Internet search engine and mobile software provider, is working with unnamed network operators on developing a cellular plan.

"You will see us announce it in the coming months," he said.

Speaking at the Mobile World Congress wireless show in Barcelona, Pichai said on Monday, "We are at a stage where it important to think about hardware, software and connectability together."

Pichai calls Google's plan to offer cellular services "a project" and insists that the Internet giant is not a threat to traditional telephone and Internet service providers.

"We don't intend to be a network operator at scale," he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Credit cards

Costco strikes deal with Citi, Visa

Costco says it struck a deal for Citi to be the exclusive issuer of its co-branded credit cards in the U.S., with Visa replacing American Express.

American Express said its relationship with Costco expires March 31, 2016.

Costco has been accepting MasterCards at its Canadian locations since Jan. 1. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 79.78¢ (- 0.20¢)

TSX 15,264.05 (+29.71)

OIL $49.59 US (- 17¢)

GOLD $1,208.20 US (-$4.90)

Natural gas: $2.698 (- 3.6¢)
Dow Jones: 18,288.63 (+155.93)

Super Bowl ads. Bell goes to court over CRTC ruling

Canadians may not get to watch those pricey American Super Bowl ads on Canadian TV channels after all, if Bell gets its way.

Canada's broadcast regulator issued a ban earlier this year on the so-called simultaneous substitution of Canadian advertising over U.S. ads during the NFL final.

But Bell Media called the decision unfair Monday as it filed a motion with the Federal Court of Appeal seeking leave to appeal, saying the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission acted in error.

Broadcasters have argued they need the simsub revenue generated by the ads to pay for the Canadian rights to air the Super Bowl.

The Super Bowl simsub decision directly affects only Bell in the immediate term because it holds the broadcasting rights to the game.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The New England Patriots' Matt Light, centre, New York Giants' Justin Tuck, left, and Baltimore Ravens' Ray Lewis appear in a Super Bowl commercial for SoBe Life Water. COURTESY PEPSICO INC./THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

VOICES

COMPASS CARD POINTS TO POOR CHOICES

In the unfolding saga between TransLink and the province, the real story around the program is not why TransLink can't be trusted — it's the opposite

YOUR RIDE
Karen Quinn Fung

A transit user tests out the Compass card in Vancouver. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

Many of those pushing a No vote for the congestion improvement sales tax to fund the Mayors' Council's 10-year vision of transportation improvements often cite the Compass card as evidence of TransLink's financial ineptitude.

But for those of us with long memories of the unfolding saga between TransLink and the provincial government, the real story around the Compass program is not why TransLink can't be trusted.

It's the exact opposite.

The Compass program — including fare gates and electronic fare cards — will never pay for itself on the basis of fares collected from reduced fare evasion. As blogger and transit insider Stephen Rees has long documented, TransLink's studies continually made this fiscally key point — to no avail. The province, through then-Minister of Transportation Kevin Falcon, ignored these statements, leaving TransLink with hastily negotiated money from the provincial and federal governments and requiring them to move forward as they, not we the public, deemed necessary.

Furthermore, we could have decided to have an electronic fare card system without fare gates; Seattle has one. Fare gates slow down entry and exit, making transit less efficient. They also meant costly retrofits for the 33 existing SkyTrain stations that were never designed for them.

Was there a public conversation to talk through the trade offs around fare gates alongside an electronic fare card system, or how it would work alongside our existing zoned fare structure? No. That decision came from up high.

Electronic fare cards have obvious merits for the transit experience. But it is rather hypocritical for those claiming the Mayor's Council's lack of public consultation, to let the province off the hook for acting unilaterally on Compass, even while TransLink was focused on the bottom line.

This is not unlike your boss forcing you to do something you tell them is a bad decision. Then, when shareholders show up at your desk angry because things are turning out badly — for reasons you had pointed out — your boss shrugs and points to you as the one to blame.

So what should this mean for the referendum?

Among other things, a yes vote is an affirmation of a process that includes our local elected officials. Municipalities identified projects through consultations — residents taking time away from children, jobs and hobbies to attend open houses, to learn about their communities, and to write letters and fill in surveys about what matters to them.

The Mayor's Council's 10-year vision, made up of municipal priorities, is much more transparent than wondering who had the ear of the premier or minister in pushing one project or another.

It's hardly perfect. But that's better than the kind of decision-making we've been seeing for transportation, and it's one that is worth your Yes vote for.

DO YOU HAVE A TRANSIT IDEA?
Shoot us an email:
vancouver@metronews.ca

Karen Quinn Fung writes on sustainable transportation issues and policy. Find her @counti8 on Twitter.

You can Meet a Muslim Family, but don't stop there

DEENA DOUARA
readers@metronews.ca

Ever wondered why Muslims don't eat pork? Dying to understand what "Allahu Akbar" really means? Well, thanks to a national campaign that launched Sunday, you can ask a real live Muslim near you these burning questions and more!

Ahmadiyya Muslims (a minority sect of Islam) will for the next couple of weeks invite strangers into their homes to dispel misconceptions about Islam.

There are some obvious concerns with the Meet a Muslim Family campaign, encapsulated by this tweet: @ShebaSid: "I feel like the next step is a zoo full of Muslims. You can poke and prod us and coo at us. Throw us a piece of meat. #MeetAMuslimFamily #WTF"

As a Muslim myself, I can relate. But in the context of a country where many people — even in urban areas — find us no less exotic than wallabies (and considerably more violent), it's laudable that some in the community are being proactive.

Last week's outrageous incident of a Quebec judge refusing to hear a woman's case because she was wearing a head scarf demonstrates a need to educate the public on how the hijab, for example, is a bit different than sunglasses (and also not a sign of oppression — but that's for a different article).

In light of all the false information propagated by both critics of Islam and by the terrorists who've perverted it, if Muslims wish to organize campaigns or stunts that find them holding signs inviting passersby to meet or hug them, well, it's understandable.

However, a note of caution with these campaigns, illustrated with this anecdote:

In discussing a novel with a group of friends recently, I explained my shock at descriptions of Mennonite youth having sex, doing drugs and acting like "normal" rebellious teens. A friend interjected: "Oh no, they're not like that at all! I lived with one in university, and they are very strict and pure."

Hug me, I'm Muslim

In light of all the false information propagated by both critics of Islam and by the terrorists who've perverted it, if Muslims wish to organize campaigns or stunts that find them holding signs inviting passersby to meet or hug them, well, it's understandable.

My friend not only met a Mennonite, she lived with a Mennonite. And that is how she understands anything to do with them. The problem with Meet a Muslim Family is that no one person could possibly speak for a group that's composed of more than a billion and a half people worldwide. Some Muslim families pray together, others drink together. Some can take four hours explaining why we're meant to pray five times a day, others would say little more than, "It's one of the pillars."

While non-Muslims proactively seeking knowledge is noble, realistically, our communities cannot expect that. "Educate yourselves" is not a fair proposition. For better or worse, people develop impressions through those they know, and the onus is on Muslims to be open about their faith with neighbours and colleagues, mix in with other communities and be vocal in the face of false, misleading or offensive rhetoric.

So sure, go meet a Muslim. But what's better than knowing one Muslim is knowing more than one Muslim.

Deena Douara is a Toronto-based freelancer and communications consultant. @Deena_Do

metro

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News flash: Cameron likes sex, hates Twitter

Newlywed Cameron Diaz has an exciting new workout routine for you to try, but just don't expect her to release a video for it. Diaz decided it was about time she took a firm position on the topic of sex.

"It's something healthy that we need to be doing for many different reasons," she tells Cosmopolitan. Also healthy? Exercise. "People say, 'My body rejects exercise.' No, it doesn't. Your mind rejects exercise." Whoa. Oh, and while she's imparting so much wisdom, Diaz also wants to talk about moderation.

"Well-being is an equation," she intones. "Remember, you don't have to have the whole cake, you can have a piece." So go ahead, eat that piece of cake.

But it's not all positivity and sunbeams in Diaz's latest treatise on the lives of the healthy. She also admits there are some things she doesn't like. For instance, Twitter.

"I think social media is a crazy-ass experiment on society," she says. "The way people use it to get validation from a bunch of strangers is dangerous. What's the point?" Says the woman on the cover of a magazine talking about her sex life.

What it takes to get Kanye to Oxford

Kanye West gave a lecture at Oxford University Monday because obviously, right?

He's all about the speeches these days. But what did it take for the Oxford Guild Business Society to get Yeezus at the lectern?

"Many hours negotiating against the odds," according to Guild chairman Abbas Kazmi. But was it worth it?

According to live-tweeting by students attending the event, totally. He offered some gems like, "Why I say the Matrix is like the Bible and what is my definition of the Matrix?" and "We have the ability to approach our race like ants, or we have the ability to approach our race like crabs." Oh, and: "Obama calls the home phone, by the way."

Taylor Swift ALL PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

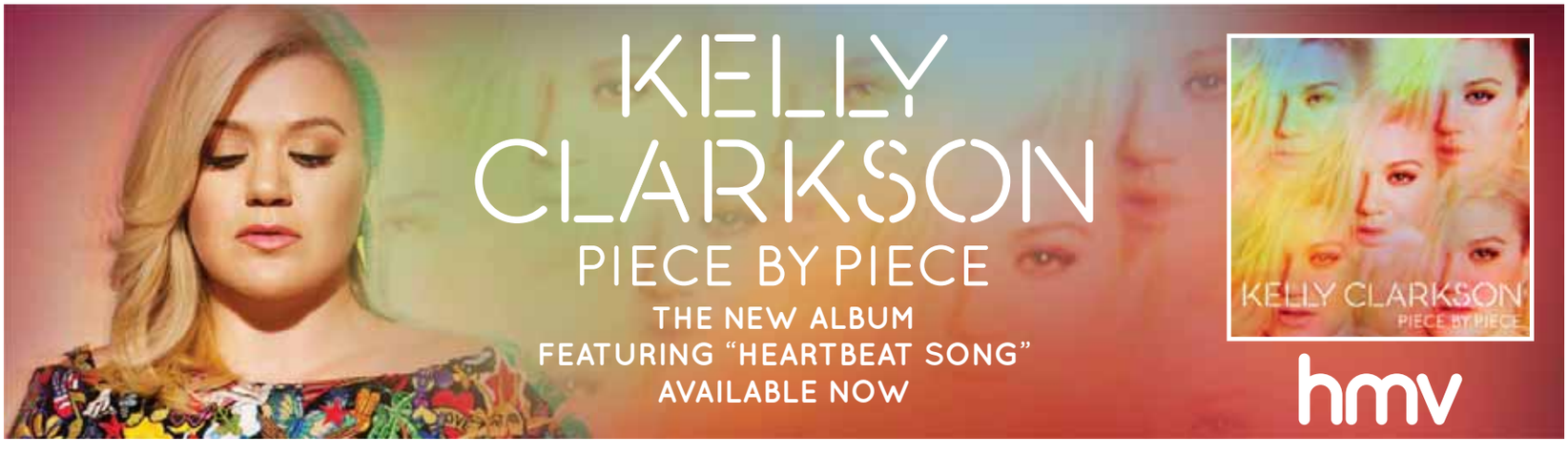
Baby helps Swift shake off Perry beef

Taylor Swift has a new job. Jamie King took to Instagram to announce that she'd nominated the Shake it Off singer to be the godmother of her second, yet-to-arrive child. "Taylor Swift will forever be watching over our new baby," King wrote. Swift herself posted a photo of communing with King's pregnant tummy.

And it's good that Swift has a new gig, since she's apparently shying away from her old job of feuding with Katy Perry. In a lengthy chat with the Telegraph, Swift vows not to mention Perry anymore, so stop bringing her up, OK?

"I'm not giving them anything to write about," she says when asked about Bad Blood, her song allegedly about Perry. "I'm never going to talk about her in my interview. It's not going to happen."

Fine, whatever. But she will talk about her love life. Or the lack thereof. "I'll probably still be single" at 30, she predicts. "Let's be honest. No one's going to sign up for this and everything that goes with it. 'Hi, nice to meet you, want a date? Do you love camera flashes? I hope you do!' I don't know what's going to happen if I'm ever content in a relationship — no idea how that's going to work. I don' t even know if that's possible with the life I have."



Looking to the future by Chasing Yesterday

New album. Former Oasis man Noel Gallagher is loving life as a solo artist

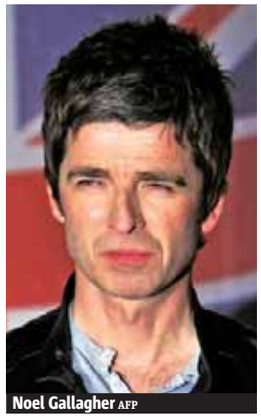
Former Oasis star Noel Gallagher is putting his past behind him, releasing a new solo album, ruling out a reunion with his brother Liam.

Oasis split five years ago after nearly two decades of fractious sibling rivalry between guitarist Noel and his younger brother Liam, the band's frontman.

"I haven't seen him for about five months but we text quite a lot. It's usually him insulting me," laughs Gallagher, during an interview in London.

Liam's post-Oasis band Beady Eye recently broke up as well but he is quick to dismiss any suggestion of a reunion with his 42-year-old brother.

"The answer is no," he says.


Noel Gallagher AFP

His new album Chasing Yesterday, his second since the band split, is released on March 2 and features his signature combination of layered guitars and elliptical lyrics.

The star is full of enthusiasm for the life of a solo artist.

"It's more rewarding, it's more fulfilling. I like being in charge of everything," he says.

"I just write songs and I collect the songs together and I make an album out of them."

Gallagher is now a 47-year-old family man with three children who is more likely to be found watching his beloved Manchester City than indulging a rock 'n' roll lifestyle.

His legendary bile towards musicians whose work he does not rate has not diminished with age.

"Beyoncé, not for me. My wife loves her but she's got no taste. Katy Perry? Even my daughter hates her and she's 15. Sam Smith? Not for me," he says.

"Traditional rock stars are like wild animals — Mick Jagger or my brother," he adds.

"They don't give a f—. Modern rock stars, Alex Turner (of Arctic Monkeys) or Sergio from Kasabian, they do give a f—, they care about their hairstyle, they care about what they think." AFP

BEING A LONELY KID EVENTUALLY PAYS OFF.

People without any siblings are more likely to earn six figures than those with brothers or sisters.

THOUGHTS? TWEET US @WORKOPOLIS
For references, view the full article at workopolis.com

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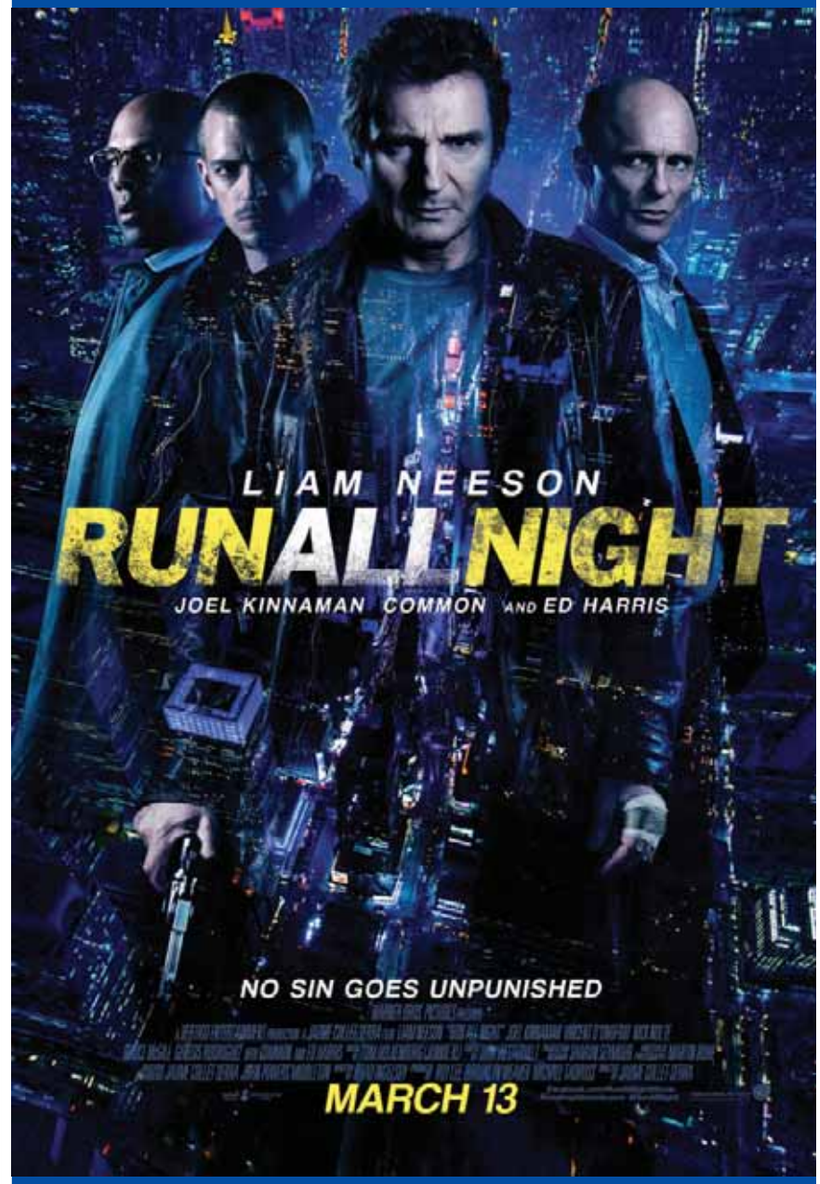

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LIFE 3

Fertility myths debunked

Trying to get pregnant? An expert sets the record straight on a few widespread misconceptions

EMILY LAURENCE
Metro in New York City

Educate yourself about fertility before you try to have a baby. ISTOCK

Whether you're trying to get pregnant now or you want to have kids in the far-off future, educating yourself about fertility can only help your case. "If you want a good outcome, you need to be thoughtful about what information out there can help you," says Dr. Jamie Grifo, director of the New York University Fertility Center and co-author of The Whole Life Fertility Plan. Here, he helps expose some myths surrounding fertility.

Myth #1: Being on the pill now will hurt your chances of getting pregnant later.

Dr. Grifo says this is a huge misconception people have for two reasons. The first is that it can take anywhere from three months to a year for a woman's menstrual cycle to get back to normal.

"It's harder initially (to conceive), but there's no measurable impact on fertility," Dr. Grifo says.

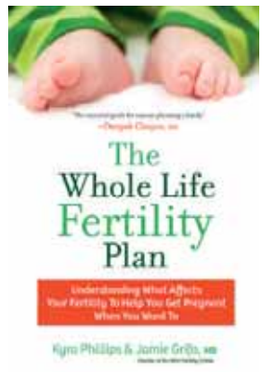
"Another reason for this myth is that a lot of women are on the pill until their late 30s and then have trouble getting pregnant," Dr. Grifo says. "But the pill has nothing to do with it. They'd have the same problem if they had never been on the pill. (It's really because) it's harder to get pregnant after a certain age."

Over 30? Now is the time start thinking about pregnancy

"It breaks my heart when a 44-year-old woman sits down in my office completely dumbfounded that she's having trouble getting pregnant."
Dr. Jamie Grifo, co-author of The Whole Life Fertility Plan

Myth #2: You shouldn't think about fertility until you're absolutely ready to have a baby.

If you are a woman over 30, Dr. Grifo says you need to start thinking about if and when you want to be a mom now, when there are more options available to you.



"It breaks my heart when a 44-year-old woman sits down in my office completely dumbfounded that she's having trouble getting pregnant," Dr. Grifo says.

Simply educating yourself about fertility is a good place to start. Then you can start weighing your options, such as if you want to freeze your eggs so you can be your own egg donor later, when you are ready to have a child, though there are several other options as well.

Myth #3: Drinking alcohol will hurt your chances of getting pregnant.

Good news — Dr. Grifo says having three or four glasses of wine a week isn't going to hurt your eggs. Things that may negatively impact your fertility include smoking and too much junk food.

"It's more about treating your body with respect and common sense," Dr. Grifo says, stressing the importance of eating a balanced diet rich in protein and healthy fats, as well as regularly exercising.

Hearing

Your jam could be bad for your ears, WHO says

More than one billion young people risk damaging their hearing through listening to loud music, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Friday.

The WHO estimates that around half of those between the ages of 12 and 35 in middle- and high-income countries are at risk due to unsafe levels of sound on personal audio devices or smartphones.

Another 40 per cent are at risk from damaging audio levels at concert venues and night clubs.

"More and more young people are exposed to unsafe levels of sounds. Young people should be aware that once you lose your hearing, it won't come back," said Shelley Chadha, a WHO specialist on hearing impairment.

To counter the risks, the WHO recommends personal audio devices not be used for more than an hour a day, and used at reduced sound levels.

The use of earplugs in loud conditions and regular checkups were part of the recommendations as well.

The WHO also wants governments to play a role by imposing strict regulations on noise in public places. AFP

Listen with care, says WHO. ISTOCK

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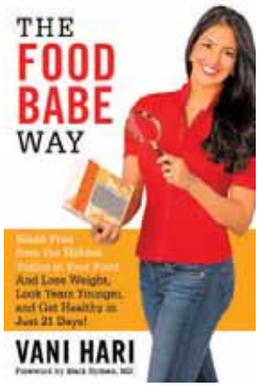
From popular wellness blog to budding business

Health. Meet the next generation of diet and exercise gurus

An immense following on the Internet has led the way for two young bloggers to pursue their passions — and preachings — full throttle, and a recent book for each marks anew their unprecedented success.

When Cassey Ho pepped up the art of Pilates in 2009, she turned to YouTube and soon created the channel Blogilates which, with playful but challenging videos coloured by Ho's bubbly So-Cal charm, became a sensation.

Now the top fitness channel on YouTube has a subscriber base of over 1.8 million, ringing in 60,000 views per day and eight-million views per month, according to wbur's CommonHealth, and fans of the site are anxiously awaiting the March release of Ho's first book, Hot Body Year Round.



Ho is creating an empire of her free fitness service, whose pink-splashed website contains recipes, nutrition information, printable workout guides and a link to her BODYPOP sportswear line, which she launched last year.

Another young star of the wellness blogosphere has an equally enviable figure, although Food Babe Vani Hari has posted old photos of herself considerably heavier, taken before she started watching what she ate and went up in arms against the food industry.

Fitness blogger Cassey Ho

She's got no credentials in food science or nutrition studies, yet people listened when she started speaking out in a society that's increasingly wary of the food industry and created her Food Babe blog in 2011.

According to her blog, Hari's efforts have helped contribute to corporations such as Starbucks and Kraft parting ways with ingredients such as artificial corn syrup, colouring and texturizing agents.

Hari, whose website contains recipes, shopping strategies and other practical advice, recently came out with her book The Food Babe Way, published by Little, Brown & Company.

Like Ho, Hari has spun her blog into a career. Having quit her job in corporate America, she now makes her living from selling an array of eating guides on her website and through affiliated marketing partnerships with brands that produce foods she deems acceptable.

She's been harshly criticized by industry insiders and scientists alike, yet the recent, dramatic reversal of dietary guidelines by the US Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Agriculture (USDA) could indicate that we still have a lot to learn about nutrition.

AFP

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Celebrating black history

Students and faculty at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) are doing what they can to support black history and end racial discrimination during Black History Month. LENÉE SON PHOTO

DANIEL HENDRIKSEN
For Metro

Throughout February and March students and faculty at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) are doing what they can to support black history and end racial discrimination.

The United Nation's International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is on March 21, and KPU is holding events at the school to raise awareness for the cause. The institution's Black History and Elimination of Racial Discrimination Series (BHERDS) comprises of a series of occasions, including a Black History film festival that was held Feb. 16-17, a Black History Month Confab and Cultural Show on Feb. 18, and an ongoing student poster showcase on black inventors.

Dr. Charles Quist-Adade, a member of the sociology faculty at KPU, started organizing the confab in 2007. He spoke in a media release about the two events and the opportunity they allow to shed light on the beginnings of Black History Month.

"The two events our series recognizes are worthy of observing by virtue of their historical significance and their wide-ranging impact on people everywhere," Quist-Adade said. "They remind us of 'man's inhumanity to man,' but also of the human spirit that withstands adversity, that fights oppression. For KPU students, faculty and the general public, the BHERDS fills gaps in knowledge and provides new information about the history, achievements and challenges of people of African heritage."

The keynote speakers at the Black History Month Confab and Cultural Show were: Dr. Handel Kashope, director of the Centre for Culture, Identity and Education at the University of British Columbia (UBC); Dr. Annette Henry of UBC's department of language and literacy education; and Elaine Brown, an Oakland-based prisoners' rights activist and former chairperson of the Black Panther Party.

"As recent events in Ferguson, Missouri and New York City remind us, racially-based violence remains a critical issue in the present time," said Dr. Tracey Kinney, chair of KPU's history department and co-organizer of the series. "This series brings to life the struggles of the civil rights movement, and relates them to contemporary issues of race, gender and identity in a postcolonial world."

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BCIT. Honorary degree granted

During its recent winter convocation, the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) recognized Launi Skinner, chief executive officer (CEO) of First West Credit Union, with an honorary doctorate of technology.

The degree is reserved for individuals who are widely acknowledged for outstanding and sustained achievement in their area of expertise and endeavor, and judging by her track record, Skinner more than fits the bill.

Launi Skinner. CONTRIBUTED

In her role as CEO, Skinner is responsible for overseeing $10 billion in assets under administration, 240,000 members, and 1,700 employees at First West. She is the former president of Starbucks U.S., where she oversaw 7,000 company-owned stores, 3,400 licensed stores, and managed an extensive management team with operational responsibility for 130,000 employees.

"It is truly an honour to receive this recognition from BCIT," Skinner said in a press release. "The contribution that BCIT graduates make to our communities demonstrates that education is one of the greatest investments we can make in our society."

Skinner has put together a very decorated resumé of awards and honours in recent years. She was named one of four women to watch by Fortune Magazine in 2007, received a Stevie Award for best Canadian executive in 2011, named as one of the most influential women in business by Business in Vancouver in 2011, and entered the hall of fame as Canada's most powerful women by Women's Executive Network in 2014.

DANIEL HENDRIKSEN

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Cleaning up with SFU

DANIEL HENDRIKSEN
For Metro

Simon Fraser University Soap for Hope director of external relations Hangue Kim, left, senior adviser Xyleen Haban, and program manager Madhev Menon. CONTRIBUTED

A "clean" initiative put together by Simon Fraser University (SFU) students is all about giving back to the community.

The Soap for Hope program involves gathering lightly used, discarded hotel room soap and recycling it. The SFU students are working with Vancouver-based non-profit organization Mission Possible on the campaign. It involves collecting the bars of soap and turning them into liquid soap to be used in local restaurants at the Mission Possible facility through a process called the "triple rinse cycle."

"It's a process of brushing, soaking and boiling the soap," Madhev Menon, a second-year business student and program manager, said in a press release. "We first scrub it down and shred off the used top layer. Afterwards, we rinse it in ozonated water for about 15 to 20 minutes to sanitize the soap. We let it sit for a day or two until it dries. Then we shred the soap until it is really fine, boil it and add several organic products to better improve the feel and smell of the liquid soap. And there you have it — upcycled liquid soap."

The first bottles of the recycled soap were delivered to a local restaurant last November and the program is only becoming more efficient. Menon and the other organizers are working with the SFU Chemistry Student Society to develop a better soap product and to speed up the soap-making process.

The Soap for Hope team will put its initiative on display Wednesday at SFU's Global Community Open House.

For more, visit sfu.ca.

Women engineers on the rise at UBC

Statistics are showing that the more women are enrolling in engineering programs at the University of British Columbia (UBC). UBC has seen a 61 per cent jump in the number of women registered in first-year engineering undergraduate programs since 2010.

This year, 29 per cent of students in UBC's first-year engineering programs are women, up from 19.7 per cent in 2010.

According to Elizabeth Croft, associate dean, education and professional development at UBC's faculty of applied science, the spike in the number of women in these programs is thanks to the school's recruiting efforts.

"These numbers reflect the tremendous efforts we've made to recruit the best, brightest and most diverse applicants to UBC engineering," Croft said.

According to Ottawa-based Engineers Canada, Canada is projected to have a shortage of 102,000 engineers by 2020. By recruiting as many women as possible into the profession, UBC officials are hoping to shrink that number.

"Admissions will continue to be based on the highest competitive averages coupled with personal profiles that help us identify truly exceptional students," said Marc Parlange, dean of UBC's applied science faculty, which includes the engineering programs.

For more on the UBC engineering department, visit engineering.ubc.ca.

DANIEL HENDRIKSEN

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Gaining strength from women

DANIEL HENDRIKSEN
For Metro

An initiative by the Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) Foundation has been designed to support International Women's Day. Project Bloom is aimed at fostering partnerships, strategic networking and purposeful fundraising efforts that will help women grow their cohort of powerful resources and support.

The event takes place FRIDAY from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Harris Barn in Ladner, with all proceeds going towards an endowment fund that will financially help women who wish to attend KPU.

One person who is committed to doing her part to support the cause is Sonia MacNair, who owns the Turtlenina artisan studio in Tsawwassen's Beach Grove. McNair specializes in turning old furniture into unique refurbished functional objects.

"Women should be able to lean on and gain strength from other women, and Project Bloom helps foster that," MacNair said in a media release. "Project Bloom brings women together and inspires them, and I'm happy to be part of that."

MacNair has donated one of her latest creations to the event — a vintage chair and matching pillow, which are valued at about $800. She believes in the power of women helping women and she also believes in reinventing vintage objects and materials.

The keynote speaker at Project Bloom will be Tamara Vrooman, president and CEO of Vancity, while CTV's Keri Adams is set to emcee the event. Tickets are $125 and available by calling 604-599-2010 or visiting kpu.ca/foundation/project-bloom.

Sonia MacNair relaxes in the chair she refurbished to raffle in support of Project Bloom, which takes place at the Harris Barn, in the background, on Friday. CONTRIBUTED

JIBC supports Road Safety at Work Week

This week is Road Safety at Work Week in B.C., and Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC) has thrown its support behind the initiative.

With motor vehicle accidents being the leading cause of fatalities of workers in British Columbia, this important campaign is designed to raise awareness of safe driving practices at work sites across the province. The main focus for the inaugural Road Safety at Work Week is distracted driving, specifically drivers using their cellphones while behind the wheel.

Those interested in helping to raise awareness for the cause are invited to use #RSAWWeek on social media and encourage friends, family and co-workers to drive phone-free. For more, visit roadsafetyatwork.ca.

UBC students host Global Crisis Simulation

Students from the University of British Columbia (UBC) recently travelled to India, where they hosted and led an international conference.

The goals for the Vancouver-based students were to teach their peers to become leaders and to implement solutions in high-stakes issues around the world.

The conference was called the Global Crisis Simulation, and was put together by Hassan Bhatti and a team of UBC students. Bhatti — a fifth-year physics and economics student — said he came up with the idea for the event after participating in several model UN conferences and business case competitions.

"The world is changing so rapidly and we are facing societal challenges that need collaboration among private, public, and non-profit sectors," Bhatti said in a press release. "The Global Crisis Simulation was envisioned with a goal of inspiring and developing young student leaders, who can engage, collaborate, and be adaptive."

The conference was supported by UBC's offices of the president, vice-president, students, and vice-president research and international. One of the organizers' main goals was to ensure the event closely resembled real world situations. To do so they invited students from different parts of the world and many different areas of study.

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- The Swiss Hotel Management School is known as one of Switzerland's leading hotel management schools.

"Switzerland's reputation for hospitality really is remarkable," says Florent Rondez of swisseducaton.com. "Students study in the very best facilities, learning and living in an inspiring environment.

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An information seminar will be held at Swiss Education (Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, 900 West Georgia St., 604-961-1091) on Saturday. Everyone is invited.

GAIN HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

One of the biggest challenges faced by those heading back to school is relearning how to study, which was what dental assisting graduate Madelle Villanueva struggled with before she went to CDI College.

Villanueva returned to school in hopes of entering the oral health-care industry, but was concerned with the difficulties she may face. She chose to enrol in CDI College's 45-week dental assisting program, not only because it provided the technical training she needed to succeed in this field, it also allowed her to develop her skills through alternate methods such as hands-on practice in the school's labs as well as clinical placements.

"The practicum experience was very important to me because it helped me experience work in the dental field," Villanueva says.

With more than 300 hours of real-world experience, students will gain knowledge working with actual patients in consulting hygiene practices, developing X-rays, and more.

"CDI helped me with my career goals by providing me with more information on becoming a hygienist in the future," says said Nikki Nhan, another dental assisting graduate. "I would recommend this program to other people looking to start a career in my field."

For more information, please visit dental.cdicollege.ca or call 1-800-360-7186.

CONTRIBUTED

Students show off their fashion sense

Langara design formation program

Langara College and the creative work of first-year design formation students will be featured in a pop-up exhibit at Oakridge Centre March 3-17.

The exhibit, titled Brown Paper Couture, will display 26 dresses consisting of handcrafted sculptures that emulate high fashion and are inspired by various iconic designers.

Design formation instructor Kevin Smith says that what is most exciting about the designs is that they were all created by students using a limited selection of materials, including brown paper, cardboard, coffee filters, tape, and thumbtacks.

Students choose the dress they want to create and then have to figure out how to recreate its texture and look using just those materials.

"The designs get better ever year," Smith says. "They're really incredible."

The project is a cornerstone assignment of the retail visual presentation course, which teaches prop building, esthetics and creative problem solving.

Langara College is one of the province's leading undergraduate institutions. It provides a wide variety of university studies, career studies and continuing studies programs and courses to more than 23,000 students annually. The college is located at 100 West 49th St. in East Vancouver.

For more on Langara and the design formation program, visit langara.bc.ca.

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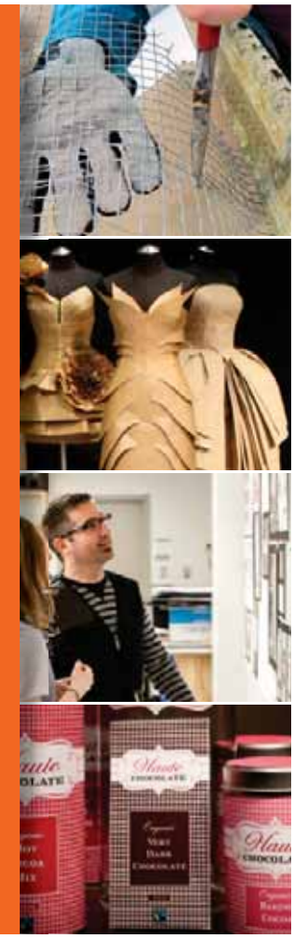

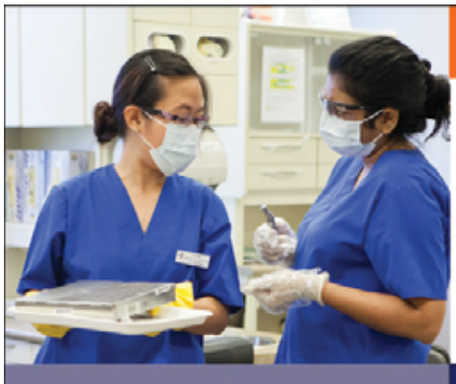

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Integrating body, mind and heart

SFU master's program challenges students

The Conference Board of Canada reports that B.C. is the "healthiest province in Canada."

But what does it mean to live healthily and actively with others?

The master of education in curriculum and instruction: Health education and active living (HEAL) program in the faculty of education at Simon Fraser University challenges its students to examine this question by looking beyond the traditional health standards — smoking rates, alcohol use, obesity and physical activity rates — to practise and define healthy and active living.

Living well daily with others requires the "integration of body, mind and heart" along with responsibilities for the education and care for others, says program professor Dr. Celeste Snowber.

"This includes the practices of living daily with children, youth and adults together instead of a solely individual focus on healthy practices," says Dr. Stephen Smith, associate professor and academic co-ordinator.

The two-year program offers its students, largely made up of nurses, teachers, recreation leaders, dieticians, dental hygienists, massage therapists, community health educators and other health practitioners opportunities to examine what it means to live healthily and actively with others.

Registered massage therapist student Randy Persad calls the program transformative.

"Myself and my fellow classmates discovered aspects of our lives and professions that have the ability to deeply influence the health and well-being of others."

Jovana Turkovic, another student and a registered dietitian, says "the program provides for a truly collaborative cohort of health and education professionals to come together, share experiences and support one another in talking the talk and walking the walk when it comes to healthy living."

Applications for the fall 2015 curriculum and instruction: Health education and active living program are being accepted until March 15.

For more, visit sfu.ca/education/gs/degreediploma/masters/ci-heal2015.html.

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As Canada's aging population increases, so does the demand for well-trained nurses who possess the knowledge and experience to provide consistent health care.

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At Vancouver Career College, practical nursing classes are designed to provide a more focused learning environment so students can have more interaction with instructors, addressing any questions they may have easily and immediately.

Students are trained on the fundamental and technical aspects involved in their field, as well as how to provide reliable patient care, which only comes with real-world experience. To do this, Vancouver Career College programs include multiple clinical placements so students can integrate their knowledge and apply their skills in a medical setting, gaining real-world experience.

Turn your dream into your career. Vancouver Career College is accepting applications for the practical nursing program.

For more information, visit nursing.vccollege.ca or call 1-800-993-4086.

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Did you know adult learners are the fastest growing population in higher education today? Trinity Western University (TWU) understands this and is making it possible for adults to finish their BA degree while working full time.

"Finishing my degree was something I wanted to do for years and years," says Andrew, a former student. "I started school in a couple different places so it was really great to put that all together and at TWU be able to finish in 2 years. It has opened up more doors than I even knew existed."

"Convenient, relevant, and relational is what characterizes TWU's program offerings" says executive director, TWU extension, Linda Long.

The degree completion BA in leadership is specifically designed for busy adults who have partially finished degrees or certificates, but need to complete their bachelor degree in evenings or weekends. This program is attracting a wide range of adults, currently working in business, health care, banking, public safety, education and more.

"Our accelerated format focuses on workplace relevant coursework, effectively integrating studies with praxis opportunities within an organization," Long says.

"The adult degree completion program, offered one night a week in Richmond and Langley (or online), allows busy adults to complete their degree in as little as two years without quitting their job," says Sandy Cameron, Richmond ADC recruiter. "With a focus on workplace-relevant coursework and assignments, the program provides the opportunity to interact, network and learn from experienced faculty and other adults in an environment rich in exchange of ideas."

See how you can finish your degree and open up your own new doors of opportunity. For more information about classes in Richmond, Langley or online, visit trinitywestern.com or call 604-513-2067.

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MTI Community College students are considering themselves pretty lucky these days — the college had a job placement rate of more than 90 per cent last year.

"We pride ourselves on being a college with career-driven programs that give students essential skills to become employed in their fields," says Komela Kiafar, campus director, MTI Community College — Vancouver campus. "And our numbers prove it."

From Jan. 1, 2014, to Dec. 31, 2014, an average of 93.65 per cent of students across all of MTI's courses earned jobs, Kiafar says.

MTI first opened as a career training centre in 1988, and since then has been committed to providing quality career training and education. Today, MTI Community College has six campuses throughout the province and offers dozens of programs in four faculties — child, family and community studies, health care, hospitality and tourism, and business.

"What makes us especially proud is that our students are benefiting by learning both the theoretical knowledge and practical skills that they can apply to their workplace."

The successful job placement statistics show that the programs at MIT have been effectively designed and taught so students learn the skills they need for a successful job placement and for the workplace, Kiafar says.

MTI instructors have worked for several years in their fields.

"They have the knowledge and practical skills and they can help students understand exactly how to find a job."

The longest program at MTI is two years and most include a practicum or co-op for each student. These placements are where students learn best, Kiafar says.

"Whatever theory they have learned in the classroom, they can apply it during their practicum or co-op — all that information comes together."

Some of MTI's programs had a 100 per cent placement rate in 2014, Kiafar says.

Students who took the accounting and payroll administrator, child care assistant, community support and youth worker, and dental assistant diploma programs and graduated last year all have jobs today.

SHUTTERSTOCK

There is also interest in medical and lab courses, the special education teacher assistant program, and tourism and hospitality management programs, Kiafar says.

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- Pharmacy Technician
- Medical Office Asssistant
- Health Care Assistant

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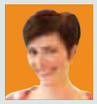

NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Is canned food allowed back into your healthy gourmet kitchen?

As February was National Canned Food Month and this month is Nutrition Month, I see no reason why the two can't get along.

I already know that I love peaches. I have since I was six, and waiting 11 months for my fix isn't fair, so I do put canned peaches through their paces especially this time of year.

Canned peaches deliver a promising amount of nutrients that are actually enhanced by the canning process. Vitamin A, folate, lycopene and some anti-oxidants are made more bio-available by the heating and canning process. But the truly impressive nutrient is vitamin E.

Vitamin E is a fat-soluble, anti-inflammatory, anti-aging nutrient that is usually associated with nuts and seeds. And while those little nuggets are great for you, a small handful is all you can eat each day because of their caloric punch. Fruit sources, on the other hand, can be layered in without worry and consumed in satisfyingly high amounts.

There is even support that the canning process actually enhances the eye-protecting nutrients of leutin and zeaxanthan, and we know lycopene (present in high amounts in peaches), which helps prevent prostate cancer, benefits from the heating of tomatoes into sauce.

There's no need to wait for fresh peach season when canned peaches pack such a nutrient-rich punch. ISTOCK

This recipe serves four. TERESA ALBERT

Peaches get saucy with pork

30 minutes to dinner.
Peach sauce turns a curried pork tenderloin into a sweet surprise

Ingredients

- 1 -1.5 pound pork tenderloin cut into 4 equal pieces
- 1 tbsp curry powder
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 2 cloves garlic, minced and divided
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 can clingstone peach slices, juice reserved
- 1 cup sweet white wine
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
- Pea shoots for garnish, optional

Directions

1. Place pork tenderloin in a large freezer bag, combine curry and chili powders, one clove of garlic and olive oil and rub well. Set aside on counter for a few minutes or place in fridge to marinate for up to 24 hours.

2. In a small pot, combine juice from clingstone peaches (but set aside peaches themselves until later), wine, vinegar and remaining garlic. Bring to a boil and simmer to reduce into a sauce for 10-20 minutes. Stir in peaches and keep warm until pork is cooked.

3. Empty pork into a casserole dish and bake at 400 F for 20 minutes until cooked through to 130 F. Add peach sauce and cook for 5-10 more minutes. Garnish with pea shoots or other herb greens.

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SPORTS 4

‘My heart’s in Vancouver’

NHL. Kassian sticks with the Canucks as trade deadline passes

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

The NHL’s trade deadline has come and gone.

Zack Kassian, who had been in the midst of speculation for weeks while coming back from a finger injury and then being a healthy scratch, remained with the Vancouver Canucks.

General manager Jim Benning said there was interest in the 24-year-old Kassian from other teams, and the Canucks also called teams to gauge their interest in the developing power forward.

“We identified players of similar ilk that we would consider doing,” Benning told reporters once the deadline passed. “But at the end of the day, Zack’s played very well for us the last couple of weeks. We’ve been happy with his play. He’s stepped up and he’s doing the things that we want him to do.”

Kassian, who was sporting quite a shiner around his left eye after a punch from Ryan Reaves in Sunday’s win over St. Louis, skated on the top line with Daniel and Henrik Sedin at Monday’s practice.

He wasn’t rushed off the ice as the deadline approached.

“Looking at the clock. I’m still here,” said Kassian.

“All the joking aside, I love Vancouver. Love my team. Love my teammates and definitely want to be here. But obviously if the team didn’t think I fit in … obviously go somewhere else. But my heart’s in Vancouver.”

Kassian has made the most of his time with the Sedin twins. His deployment to that line, which began in New Jersey, occurred when Alex Burrows suffered a lower-body injury and was taken out of the lineup.

Kassian has 10 points in his last 12 games, including a recent run of four goals in three games.

While there was interest in Kassian, he said he hadn’t talked to anyone from Canucks management or his agency about a possible trade.

Canucks acquire Baertschi

The Canucks acquired forward Sven Baertschi from the Calgary Flames in exchange for a second-round pick in this year’s draft.

- GM Jim Benning believes Baertschi can develop into a top-six forward.
- Baertschi, 22, is a former first-round pick of the Flames, but has struggled to fit in with that organization. In 15 NHL games this season, he has four assists.

Canucks general manager Jim Benning said other GMs expressed interest in Zack Kassian, “but at the end of the day, Zack’s played very well for us the last couple of weeks.” MADDIE MEYER/GETTY IMAGES

MLS. Whitecaps ready to launch 2015 season

The Vancouver Whitecaps are ready to start the season, whether the MLS labour dispute allows for it or not.

On Monday night at the Commodore Ballroom in Vancouver, the Whitecaps unveiled their new primary home kits for the upcoming season, while getting a chance to mingle with fans at the same time.

The night started off with the managers of both the Whitecaps and the newly formed Whitecaps FC 2 — Carl Robinson and Alan Koch — being introduced to the crowd. They answered questions fans may have of the teams, read by club ambassador Carl Valentine.

Russell Teibert was then given the opportunity to introduce his teammates one by one as they walked across the stage sporting their new kits, serenaded with a round of applause from the fans.

The event, only open to season-ticket holders, allowed for the supporters to be introduced face-to-face to the squad, while getting the chance to purchase the new home kit before it goes on sale to the general public.

Club president Bob Lenarduzzi ended the night off speaking about the passionate fan support that exists within the club.

“You are a part of generating an atmosphere at BC Place that, with all due respect to our friends at the Canucks, our friends at the Lions, is the best sporting atmosphere in Vancouver,” said Lenarduzzi.

RYAN LEHAL/FOR METRO

AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
With luck planet Jupiter so strong in your chart this has to be one of the best times of the year for you. No matter how many occasions you have failed in the past you will succeed now.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Don't listen to your own doubts and fears today because they will cloud your mind and prevent you from reaching your true potential.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You will make an important decision today, quite possibly the single most important decision you will make for months to come.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
If anyone tries to push you around or force you in a direction you don't want to go they will soon learn the error of their ways. You are in no mood to take nonsense.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You will go your own way today, and the more others try to persuade you to cautious the more risks you are likely to take.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
The more you try to break free of restrictions the more they seem to hold you back. Make an extra special effort to regain your independence.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You won't hesitate to get involved in some kind of dispute today, even if it has nothing to do with you. Make sure you know your facts.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
If you feel the need to change the way you do things now is the time to be a bit more adventurous and try out new methods and routines.

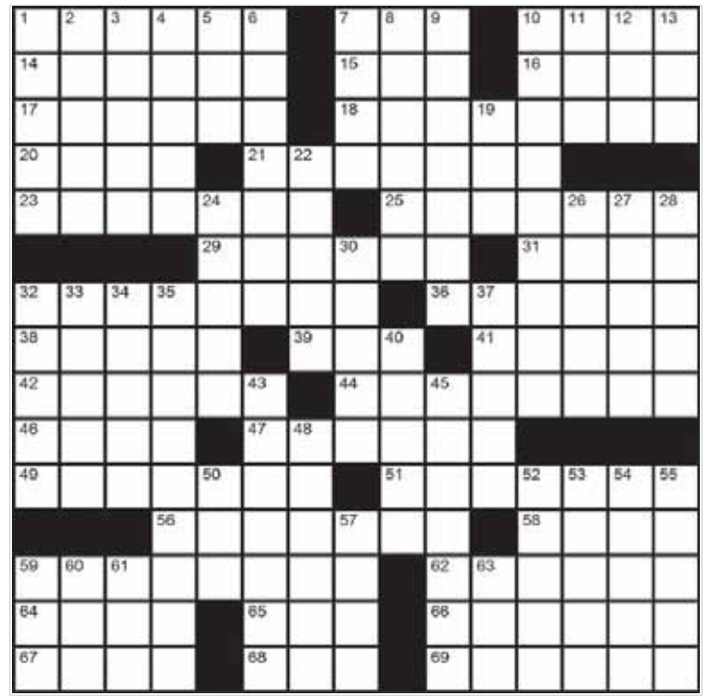
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
No matter how many barriers or obstacles you have to deal with today you will overcome them all with ease. It's not often it's as good as this, so make the most of it and do something special.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Some kind of upheaval will take place today. However, this particular upheaval comes with an opportunity attached. You could make some money.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Someone wants to repay you for all the kindness you have shown. It will make them feel good to do you a favour.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You know what you want and you know how to get it and anyone who stands in your way won't be standing for long. Every now and again you go right the other way and just take what you desire.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across
1. Muscle cramps
7. Male swan
10. Yukon village near the Alaska border
14. Quieten: 2 wds.
15. Mr. Vigoda
16. Exterior tap connection
17. Amusement gallery
18. "__ __ Door" (Canadian children's show)
20. Tilt
21. Of superior quality
23. From one side only in law: 2 wds.
25. Mould makers
29. Decorative
31. Verifiable
32. Ones who rudely make their way through crowds
36. Lion, when communicating
38. Outlandish
39. "Sure."
41. LED = Light-Emitting __
42. Abrupt arrival
44. Heeled hero
46. Pond guck
47. Stellar
49. Artist's 'eggy' painting
51. Logging-on names, e.g.: 2 wds.
56. Idina Menzel's role in Broadway musical Wicked
58. Send forth
59. Big quantity
62. Cheap
64. Press
65. Hour: Italian
66. Halifax singer, Rich __: His current album is called 'Ephemeral'
67. Ski lift
68. Hippy-protested war
69. "The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz" (1974) character

Down
1. Sedimentary rock
2. Laundry detergent brand
3. Guild for songwriters, e.g.
4. First two syllables of Woodstock's doo-wop group
5. Earth-turned-wet
6. Phantom
7. Organized†crime boss
8. Orchestra member
9. Hudson Bay archipelago, __ Islands
10. __-__ Aviation (Corporate air charter provider in Saskatchewan)
11. Fall asleep, with Off
12. Mount __ (Volcano of Japan)
13. Become
19. Particular parrot
22. British actor Mr. Cavill
24. Theatrical gigs
26. Mr. Flynn
27. Montreal: Mountain Street = __ __ la Montagne
28. Parched periods
30. "Why don't you take _ __?" (There are chairs everywhere)
32. Beam
33. Weight amount
34. Play the ukulele
35. Alberta: Grande Prairie's bird symbol, __ Swan
37. Swan Lake character
40. Exfoliating facial cleanser
43. Sea hunter's weapon
45. Can give input to the decision: 3 wds.
48. Northern Africa expanse
50. Building wing
52. Treat the sprain once more
53. "__ __ in Love" by 10cc
54. 7, 8, or 9
55. Songwriting team, Cahn-__
57. Eve's beau
59. Objectionable word
60. Royal symbol
61. Toronto attraction, __ Khan Museum
63. Phone's 8 letters

Yesterday's Crossword

Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	2	1			5			
6		4	2	8				
9	3			4		7		
	4		8					1
	6	8		7		2	4	
7					6		9	
		3		6			5	8
				3	4	1		6
			5			9	3	

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Yesterday's Sudoku

4	3	6	1	5	7	9	8	2
7	5	1	2	8	9	4	3	6
2	9	8	4	3	6	1	7	5
9	6	2	7	1	4	8	5	3
5	7	4	3	9	8	6	2	1
8	1	3	6	2	5	7	9	4
1	4	5	9	7	3	2	6	8
6	8	7	5	4	2	3	1	9
3	2	9	8	6	1	5	4	7

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